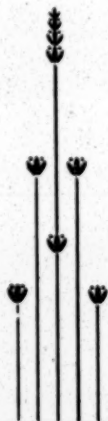


June 8, 1900. - 27th - 14.th De La Mare.

How to Meet the Mormon Missionaries

BY A
...UTAH WORKER...



Literature Department
of the
Woman's Board of Home Missions
of the Presbyterian Church
156 Fifth Ave. New York

How to Meet the Mormon Missionaries.

LETTER FROM A UTAH WORKER.

-----, April 23, 1900.

Miss -----.

-----Illinois.

Dear Miss -----: Your favor of April 12 directed to -----, Utah, has been forwarded to me at the above address.

I am very much interested in what you say about the work of the Mormons in your neighboring town of -----, and shall be glad to send some literature to the persons whose names you mention, and I trust that some of them may take sufficient interest to raise a small fund which will enable us to send enough to distribute among all the families who are likely to be influenced by the work of the Mormon "missionaries." To make it sure all the families should be forewarned, for no one can tell who may be influenced or who will escape.

You will find, if you take the trouble to investigate the work and the methods of the Mormon El-

ders, that their schemes are so cunningly devised as to "deceive, if it were possible, even the elect." No matter how high may be one's moral standard and ideals, no one is safe under the influence of these trained and skillful deceivers without being forewarned and thoroughly fortified by prayer and faith, and armed by a thorough mastery of the "Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Even then he will be astonished to find how skillfully the arch enemy has trained these, his most successful emissaries, to pervert the Scriptures so as to make them seem to teach the vilest lies which the Elders have to tell.

Of course I sympathize most deeply with you in your solicitude for your brother, and will pray for him, as you request. If the Elders have gained his sympathy or his confidence in the slightest degree, then there is need to exercise extreme caution, lest you confirm whatever faith he may have come to have in Mormonism, instead of weakening it, as you desire to do. As soon as the Elders gain the least influence over man or woman they will prepare him at once so that whatever effort his friends may make to reclaim him shall prove futile. For instance, they will tell the new "convert:" "We will give you signs by which you may determine whether this is in very truth the work of God or not. If this is the work of God, men will oppose it, as they have opposed the work of God in all the ages. If you have any sympathy with us, or any confidence in us, and manifest such sympathy, or confidence, your friends will disapprove of your course. Aye, they may even dislike you and hate you for it. If your faith is strong enough to

hold out, possibly even the members of your own family may ostracize you and banish you from their circle. This is what Christ foretold to His ancient disciples. This is what was done to them, and this is what will be done to-day whenever people become true disciples of His. The fact that such opposition does not occur when people ally themselves with the so-called Christian sects of to-day is abundant proof that they are not the church of Christ." The Elders will also tell the new "converts" to ask their friends what objection they have to Mormonism, and "see whether they can name a single objection which will not hold with equal force against the ancient disciples of Christ, and see whether nine out of ten of the reasons which people give for opposing Mormonism are not wholly false, etc." Then, if you say anything which they can make to appear to be parallel to any charges made against the New Testament disciples, or, if you say anything which you cannot prove, no matter how true it may be, they will use it as "proof that we are the people of God, because our enemies are falsely accusing us for the sake of Christ, etc."

You will, therefore, see that there is need to be "as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves." If your brother is interested in the Elders, you must be careful not to show any anger or disgust on that account, or to say anything severe against the Elders personally, no matter how difficult it may be to avoid it. You know the Bible teaches us that "he that winneth souls is wise."

This is emphatically true in case of the one who reclaims a soul from Mormon influence.

A good Maryland lady, who had been studying Mormonism and its methods for the purpose of saving some of her friends from its influence, wrote me about two years ago, saying: "I have come to the conclusion that Mormonism is the devil's masterpiece;" and from my own experience in mission work among the Mormons I am fully convinced that this lady received that suggestion from Above. It seems so apt and so true.

I inclose you a copy of a little tract, "Methods of Mormon Missionaries." Without any hint that it was sent to you for any such purpose I wish you would send it to your brother and ask him whether the Elders whom he has met are using the "methods" described in this tract. It will be worth your while to write to the League for Social Service, 105 East 22d street, New York City, N. Y., and get a full set of the tracts of which this is the first.

If your brother is really interested in the work of the Elders, I wish I might meet him without his knowing that I knew anything about it. Under such circumstances it would be easy to overturn all his faith in Mormonism in a very short time, so long as he is not thoroughly confirmed in the faith of that system. If you could get the mastery of the salient features of Mormonism yourself, and are sufficiently well grounded in the Scriptures to make it safe for you to do so, the very best thing that you could do would be to go with him to the Mormon meetings, or whenever he talks with the Elders, and, without manifesting any antagonism at all, just ask them questions until you draw out of them all their vile doctrines. They will do a

good deal of lying at first, but they will have to admit some things as they go along, if you know how to ask them questions. Finally, when they see that you are not manifesting any opposition, they will conclude that you are in sympathy with it all, or at least "prepared to receive it," and then they will tell you the whole story, and before you knew it, you would have your brother fighting them to protect you from the awful stuff which the Elders have to tell. This would cure him effectually.

The most satisfaction that I have ever enjoyed in anything which has ever occurred in my experience was as follows:

In the fall of 1896, an earnest young Mormon in Utah undertook to convert me to Mormonism. He came to me and wanted to know whether I would have any objections to having him explain to me the character of the Mormon belief. I told him: "No; not at all. If you people have anything good which I do not have, I shall be glad to know about it." This was after many years' experience, during which I had learned some things. During the early part of my work among the Mormon people I should not have had any patience with him. Possibly I should have said: "No; I have no patience with your blasphemous doctrines; but, if you want to hear the truth, I shall be glad to teach you a better way." By so doing I should have repelled him and put him forever beyond my reach.

The work began. I listened to all he had to say, never making any objection to anything, simply asking questions to draw out his own ideas.

When he quoted Scripture with his Mormon interpretation, I simply asked him about other passages which would not bear that interpretation, the context plainly forbidding it. In such cases he would make note of the passages, and promise to answer my questions the next day, after having studied the passages, as he had never paid any particular attention to them. He thus came to me day after day for three months, spending about one-half hour each time. At first he did not fail to come with his Mormon answers all cut and dried, expecting me to accept them as a matter of course. These again led to other questions, and so on.

In a little while, he began to ask me my opinion upon many points. I declined to give my opinion on the ground that my opinions were immaterial to the matter under investigation, which was to ascertain what Mormon teaching was, not what the opinion of any outside party might be; but, the more I withheld my opinions the more he wanted to know what they were. Finally, in response to his earnest appeals, I told him that after he had given me his opinion upon each point I would be willing to give him, not my opinion, but what the Scriptures seemed to teach upon the same point, but that I would do so only on condition that he would never adopt any suggestion which I gave him unless it commended itself to his judgment and to his conscience after he had prayerfully studied the matter for himself.

To this he promptly agreed, and it at once put his mind in a receptive attitude, because he felt that I was not trying to force my views upon

him, but was simply giving him information in response to his own request. From the time that this turn of affairs took place the interviews became exceedingly interesting. From the first interview I had been studying the word of God night and day, hoping and praying that I might be instrumental in saving the young man who had come to save me. At that time I was teaching, hence this extra work cost me much physical and mental effort, as during those three months I scarcely ever went to rest until one or two o'clock in the morning; but, notwithstanding all the extra labor, that was one of the most soul-refreshing seasons that I have ever experienced in my life. My young friend finally broke down one day and said: "Well, ———, I began by trying to save you, but I find that I am wrong and you are right. So you will have to save me." I told him that I could not save him, that there is no one who could save him except Christ, who came to save all, who would come unto God through Him. I, however, told him that I should be most happy to point him to that blessed Savior through the means of His word.

It was not long after that until this young Mormon became a joyous, happy Christian. After this glorious consummation I asked him what had led him to change his mind. He said: "Well, there were a good many things that helped me. In the first place I had told some of my friends that you were a person of good intentions and one who was worth saving, and that I proposed to try to save you. They warned me against being so foolish as to try it. They said you had come out here

from the East and were being paid to work against the Mormons, and that you would never change your mind, even if you were convinced, for that would cause you to lose your job, and a whole lot more of the same kind of stuff. Then when I did not give up the idea of trying it, and told them I was going to give you a chance anyhow, so you would be without excuse, they said that you would insult me and do all you could to lead me astray. When I did not yield to this warning they got mad at me and cursed me for taking such risks. Then when I came to you, you did not seem to be prejudiced against me, as I thought you would be, but treated me so kindly that I became half convinced that you must be right. Then your willingness to listen to all that I had to say, and your perfect confidence in the truth as you saw it, so that you never asked me to take your word for anything, but to think for myself, was all so different from anything that I had experienced that it made a great impression upon me; but I think the thing that impressed me most of all was the way our teachers and our Bishop abused you and accused you of leading me astray when I went to them and asked them to help me to explain passages of Scripture to you which I could not explain myself. They got mad, and told me to keep away from you, that you were nothing but a dishonest hypocrite, that you were not here for any good, but to do all the harm you could do. I knew that you were not here to do harm, but to do good as you saw it; and I felt that, if you were mistaken, it was our place to set you right, not to abuse you. This

kept on until I began to see that our religion was wrong and that your religion was right. Then, of course, there was nothing for me to do but to give up Mormonism and become a Christian, etc."

This was a most blessed experience. When I first went to Utah I could not have had the patience to listen to the arguments which this young man made to start out with. I should have felt that it would be disloyal to God for me to listen to such nonsense and such falsehoods. It was only after I had learned, by long experience, that it was necessary for me to hear their side of the story in order to understand their difficulties and know how to help them. When the Lord had led me to see that this was necessary He also gave me the grace to do so with patience and with kindness, so as to gain their confidence and thus make it possible to bring the truth to bear upon them. Was not the result worth the effort? This young man is to-day an honest, earnest Christian. He is having a hard time of it among his own people; but he is enduring it all with such patience, and meekness, and gentleness, and faith as to put his enemies all to shame. At first even his own mother fought against him; but she has now relented and has taken his side, saying that he is the best of all her children, and that she does not propose to see him abused any more. She now says that, if becoming a Presbyterian is what caused her boy to become so good and true, it would be better for the rest of them if they would all follow his example and become Presbyterians, too. Of course, that is the only way that she knows how to express it. They do not think of it so much as

a change of heart, but rather as a change of profession, which leads them from one denomination to another; but I am happy to say that there are decided indications that his mother is about to become a Christian now, too. I should not be at all surprised to hear at any time that she has quit Mormonism altogether.

I take your time to tell this long story in the hope that it may help you and your friends to see the importance of the opportunity which is before you. If it were not for the change which came over the young man named above he would now be a Mormon "missionary," helping to lead others astray. Whereas, now, his whole life will be used in the cause of truth; and the indications are that he will be instrumental in saving many from that awful delusion. I am very anxious that the Christian people of this country shall be aroused to a sense of the importance of putting a stop to the demoralizing work of the Mormon missionaries, and the best way to do it would be to have a few earnest, consecrated and intelligent Christians in every community to take the Elders in hand, as fast as they come around, and kindly teach them the better way. Strange as it may seem to you, these young men believe that they are doing God's service and that their work will bring blessings to you. It is a sad commentary upon the spiritual condition of the churches of today that the millions of their membership cannot overcome the work of 2,000 Mormon "missionaries," and at the same time win these "missionaries" to Christ. If these thousands of young men could be won to Christ, with as much zeal for the

truth as they now have for Mormonism, what a blessed result that would be! My own experience with Mormon Elders convinces me that this could be done, if our Christian Church were alive as it should be. I am, therefore, praying that the "bones" may "live," and the Christian Church may arise from her lethargy and become an invincible army for the conquering of Mormonism and every other evil.

Yours sincerely,

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